

States and to draw attention to its heightened significance in this year, the 200th anniversary of the United States' 'Second War of Independence,' the War of 1812. Since its adoption by the Second Continental Congress in 1777, our flag, with its thirteen stripes and fifty stars, has proudly stood as a beacon of liberty and justice throughout the world.

For more than 200 years our flag has stood as a tangible expression of our Nation and the lofty ideals it was created to protect. In 1916 President Woodrow Wilson sought to formally recognize the significant cultural and historical legacy that our flag embodies, proclaiming that the fourteenth of June should be known as Flag Day as a means of commemorating the Flag Resolution of 1777. While Flag Day was celebrated in many communities across the country in the years following Wilson's proclamation, it was not until 1949 that President Truman signed an Act of Congress designating June 14 of each year as National Flag Day and the week on which it falls as National Flag Week.

My State of Maryland plays a prominent role in the rich and storied history of our national flag. Shortly after the British sack of Washington, D.C., the Royal Navy turned its gaze north, moving in force towards the strategic port city of Baltimore, MD. Despite the lack of formally trained, commissioned soldiers, the citizens of Baltimore diligently prepared the city's defenses and steadfastly stood their ground against the better equipped and trained forces of the British military. Despite their manifold disadvantages, the volunteer militia fought valiantly during the Battle of North Point, holding off the British infantry long enough for reinforcements to arrive. With their ground forces stymied, the British Navy commenced its intense, 25-hour bombardment of Fort McHenry. However, the bombardment was to no avail, as the stalwart American defenders refused to yield and the British were forced to depart.

During the bombardment, American lawyer Francis Scott Key, who was being held aboard an American flag-of-truce vessel in Baltimore Harbor, beheld by the dawn's early light the American flag still fluttering in the breeze atop Fort McHenry. At that moment, Key realized the Americans had survived the assault and stopped the enemy advance. Deeply moved by the sight of the American flag after the devastating assault, he immortalized the event in a poem entitled "The Defense of Fort McHenry," which was later set to music and renamed "The Star Spangled Banner." On March 3, 1931, President Herbert Hoover signed a Congressional resolution, formally making the "Star Spangled Banner" the national anthem of the United States.

The flag that flew over Fort McHenry during that fateful night is now a national treasure that remains on display

at the Smithsonian Institution as a stirring inspiration to all Americans. Each year the National Flag Day Foundation of Baltimore sponsors a moving ceremony at the Fort McHenry National Monument and Historical Shrine which brings our community together in celebration and remembrance of our illustrious history.

America's flag graces classrooms, statehouses, courtrooms, and churches, serving as a daily reminder of this Nation's past accomplishments and ongoing dedication to safeguarding individual rights and political freedom. Whether it is being carried into battle by the brave members of our armed forces as they fulfill their missions in defense of democracy and peace or flying over the public buildings, the flag is a badge of honor for all to see—a sign of our citizens' common purpose.

This week and throughout the year let us do all we can to teach younger generations the significance of our flag and to respect the men and women who have fallen to protect it. In red, white, and blue, we see the spirit of a Nation, the resilience of our Union, and the promise of a future forged in common purpose and dedication to the principles that have always kept America strong. As we reflect on our heritage, let us remember that our destiny is stitched together like those 50 stars and 13 stripes, united as one, with liberty and justice for all.

TRIBUTE TO ANGELO ROPPOLO

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, today I wish to ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Mr. Angelo Roppolo and extending my appreciation for his extraordinary accomplishments and dedication to the city of Shreveport and the State of Louisiana.

Mr. Roppolo is a modest man who seldom takes credit for his achievements and is known throughout his community as someone who avoids the spotlight. He has an unwavering loyalty to his family and friends and has never been known to abandon his core beliefs and principles.

Mr. Roppolo stands for righteousness and justice, and he has never hesitated to support a candidate who has challenged the norm. Mr. Roppolo has played integral roles in many landmark political events in Louisiana. He was involved in organizing and planning the campaigns of the first African American judge to be elected in Shreveport and in Caddo Parish, along with the campaigns of the first female judge in Caddo Parish and the first female judge on the 2nd Circuit Court of Appeals. Mr. Roppolo also served as the north Louisiana campaign chairman for Governor Kathleen Blanco, who was the first female to be elected as Governor of Louisiana.

Along with his love for the political process, Mr. Roppolo is also a strong supporter of entrepreneurs in Shreveport. He was a founder of the South Shreveport Business Association, an

organization dedicated to the success of businesses within the rapidly growing area of his community. He has also helped many individuals gain financing for their endeavors and has seen many of these ventures grow and prosper into successful businesses.

Mr. Roppolo is a kind and caring man who has always given praise and gratitude to the men and women in the armed services who serve and protect this country. Mr. Roppolo is a source of inspiration for all who know him. He is beloved throughout his community and the city of Shreveport, where his family and friends alike respect and admire all he has done for those around him.

It is with a special measure of sincerity and heartfelt commendation for the mark he has left of the State of Louisiana that I ask my colleagues to join me along with Mr. Roppolo's family in honoring and celebrating the life of this most extraordinary person.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RECOGNIZING ST. PIUS VEREIN

• Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I am pleased to honor St. Pius Verein, a social and fraternal organization in North Dakota that will soon celebrate its 100th anniversary. On June 23 and 24 of this year, the community of Scheffeld will host a celebration to recognize St. Pius Verein's history and founding.

The town of Scheffeld started with the establishment of the St. Pius Catholic Church, which was built in 1910. The town's name is said to be derived from "schoenfeld," the German word for beautiful field. In 1912, St. Pius Verein was founded by German settlers from Russia. The organization was first started as a way to unite the community. Members especially enjoyed singing and playing instruments together. Today, St. Pius Verein has 440 members. All members pay dues and contribute to a survivor benefit program that pays a benefit to families that experience a loss. St. Pius Verein holds monthly meetings, in addition to an annual picnic held on St. Pius Day. Scheffeld takes great pride in the history of St. Pius Verein, and the community is expecting an enjoyable gathering.

To celebrate the 100-year anniversary of St. Pius Verein, Scheffeld residents and visitors will participate in many fun-filled activities. Over the span of 2 days, the celebrants will enjoy children's games, a town dance, a citywide mass at St. Pius Verein Hall, a parade, an antique tractor pull, and an old-time jam session. DVDs will also be sold that describe the proud history of the town. Although many St. Pius Verein members no longer live in Scheffeld, the town is expecting big numbers for the celebration.

Mr. President, I ask the Senate to join me in congratulating St. Pius

Verein and the Schefield residents on the organization's 100th anniversary and in wishing them a bright future.●

TRIBUTE TO IMRE HIR

● Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, I wish to honor in the RECORD of the Senate an honorable American and a great Georgian, Mr. Imre Hir, on the occasion of his retirement after 40 years as general manager of Atlanta Country Club.

Imre is a native of Hungary where, in 1956, he was part of a youth movement in that country that helped drive the Soviets out. When the Soviets later returned to Hungary, Imre was forced to leave his country and sought refuge in Austria. While in Austria, Imre was debriefed by the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, which later arranged to bring him to the United States. Shortly after arriving in the United States, Imre served in the U.S. Army.

After completing his service in the military, Imre worked his way up from a dishwasher at the Red Coach Grill in Boston, MA, to becoming the general manager of Druid Hills Country Club in Atlanta in 1969. He then went on to serve as the general manager of the Atlanta Country Club, where he has held that position until this month, retiring after 40 great years.

Imre is an example of an individual who has lived the American dream, and his story is one of many among immigrants who have come to the United States—the land of opportunity—and built successful lives through hard work and perseverance.

I congratulate Imre Hir for a successful career and the contributions he has made to the United States. I wish him well in his retirement.●

SEEDS OF PEACE 20TH ANNIVERSARY

● Ms. SNOWE. Mr. President, today I wish to join with individuals across the world in recognizing the 20th anniversary of the founding of Seeds of Peace, an organization dedicated to the advancement of peace through understanding, reconciliation, acceptance, and coexistence among people, and established on the principle that long-term peace within or between nations can only be achieved with the emergence of a new generation of leaders who choose dialogue over violence.

Seeds of Peace's first camp session in 1993 was a labor of love for the late founder and esteemed journalist, John Wallach. That summer, under the leadership of Wallach, Bobbie Gottschalk, and Timothy Wilson, Seeds of Peace hosted 46 Arab and Israeli teenagers at its first summer camp in my home State of Maine. Since that day, the organization has blossomed into a full-fledged leadership program, which spans 27 countries with full staff in Amman, Gaza, Jerusalem, Kabul, Lahore, Mumbai, New York, Otisfield, Ramallah, and Tel Aviv.

Today, for 3 weeks at a time, during the months of June, July, and August, on the beautiful shores of Pleasant Lake in Otisfield, ME, Seeds of Peace brings together young people and educators from areas immersed in civil conflict, war, and other political and social unrest, to learn about coexistence and conflict resolution at their international summer camp. Camp participants engage with one another in both guided coexistence sessions and typical summer camp activities, which expose the human face that lie behind ethnic, religious, and political differences.

Now, under the acclaimed leadership of Leslie Lewin, Seeds of Peace has prepared over 5,000 alumni, known as "Seeds," primarily from the Middle East, South Asia, the Balkans, and Cyprus, for roles of leadership by offering them not only the unmatched summer camp experience of sleeping next to, eating alongside, and swimming with those who are their alleged enemies, but also a robust and worthwhile slate of intensive, year-round programs encircling the globe, which are focused on further refining the skills learned and relationships built at camp.

Seeds of Peace is a testament to the importance of conflict resolution and reconciliation programs as a tool for creating peace, and the program is indisputably making a difference in the lives of its Seeds each and every day. It is no surprise that Seeds of Peace is strongly supported by participating governments and many world leaders, and I urge my colleagues to join me in recognizing the organization's contributions to the advancement of peace—which all began with a 3 week stint at a summer camp in Maine 20 years ago. Seeds of Peace provides a promise for a better future, and I enthusiastically welcome its continued efforts for years to come.●

RECOGNIZING FALMOUTH HERITAGE MUSEUM

● Ms. SNOWE. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize the Falmouth Historical Society and the Falmouth Heritage Museum, located in my hometown of Falmouth, ME. Through their steadfast commitment to preserving the past, future generations of Mainers and Americans alike will be able to not only witness, but understand the richness of their heritage.

Established in 1966, the Falmouth Historical Society was founded upon the venerable goal of preserving and sharing the town's vast and storied history. In order to accomplish that objective, members have tirelessly researched, collected, and catalogued hundreds of years of Falmouth's sacred artifacts, while the society has sponsored several outreach and awareness events for local residents as well as visitors. Indeed, through educational programs, research assistance, and newsletters, the society works diligently to reach an ever-broadening au-

dience in the effort to showcase their many other activities, including photo exhibits, genealogical inquiries, and the Maine Heritage Day event held in September.

It was back in November of 2004 when the Falmouth Historical Society began the long and arduous process of opening a permanent museum to house their historical treasures. The original building which housed the museum was first built in 1830 and donated to the Society by Dr. David Andrews and his wife Jan for whom the house was their private home. The house was then moved in 2005 to land donated by the town of Falmouth, and following years of preparation and hard work the Falmouth Heritage Museum first opened its doors in June of 2008.

Today, the Falmouth Heritage Museum provides a unique glimpse into the past and plays a vital role in the preservation of artifacts. By serving as a new home to pieces of Maine's history, the museum offers the opportunity for historic items to serve as tools of learning and a window to the past. With knowledgeable docents to answer questions and provide greater insight into the exhibits and the early history of Falmouth, the museum provides a fun and interactive way to engage our past. Furthermore, the museum recently completed work on a new storage and display barn, which will serve as a home to the ever growing number of historical treasures. The grand opening of the barn coincides with the annual opening day festivities of the museum, this year being held on June 23.

Falmouth's rich history is well preserved thanks to the efforts of the Falmouth Historical Society and the Falmouth Heritage Museum. It is through their hard work that we are able to so readily access and learn from the past. As we look to the future of Falmouth and of Maine, we treasure the path we have already traveled. I am proud to extend my gratitude, congratulations, and praise to the Falmouth Historical Society and the Falmouth Heritage Museum for their many contributions and accomplishments. I look forward to seeing their continued growth, knowing that they will one day play a vital role in preserving the history of our present day.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Pate, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)